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dualog 9/7/04

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04048216 H.W. WILSON RECORD NUMBER: BGSA99048216 (THIS IS THE FULLTEXT)  
**Some like it hot.**

Ashmun, Barbara Blossom

Horticulture v. 96 no8 (Nov./Dec. 1999) p. 52-6

SPECIAL FEATURES: il ISSN: 0018-5329

LANGUAGE: English

COUNTRY OF PUBLICATION: United States

RECORD TYPE: Abstract; Fulltext RECORD STATUS: New record

WORD COUNT: 1537

**ABSTRACT:** A garden in Portland, Oregon, where vivid colors gleam against warm-toned foliage is described. The garden, lush and brimming with color, was influenced by a recent visit to Sissinghurst, England. To maintain the view of the Portland cityscape, plantings did not exceed 10 feet. Plant shape, color, and texture counterbalance and complement each other to create an atmospheric garden full of color and heat.

**TEXT:**

THE ENTRANCE TO THE PORTLAND, OREGON garden of Janet Roberts and Ed Clark is a shaded courtyard framed in broad-leaved and coniferous evergreens and planted with a mixture of shrubs, perennials, and annuals in muted, cool colors. A relaxing and refreshing transition space for visitors coming from the outside world, it provides a striking contrast with the rest of the garden, which is anything but cool and restrained. Follow a path around the corner and you enter a garden where vivid red, yellow, orange, and purple flowers gleam against burgundy, golden, and blue-green foliage.

Although the garden is lush and brimming, it is a relatively recent creation. On my first visit to consult with Roberts, the back garden beds were barren, emptied of all but their structural elements: several established, meticulously sculpted, red laceleaf Japanese maples and a carefully pruned pine that she could not bear to part with. The low profile of the beds allowed a panorama of Portland's cityscape, which gave pleasure year-round from inside and outside the house. To preserve the view, we decided plantings would be kept less than 10 feet tall.

Perhaps the most important influence on the new plan was Roberts's recent visit to Sissinghurst, where she had fallen in love with the bright colors and often bold combinations of the cottage garden. "Sometimes you enter a garden and feel right at home," she told me. "I just loved the cheeriness and intensity." She aimed to instill that spirit in her garden.

The initial challenge was to incorporate the laceleaf maples into the cottage garden that Roberts had in mind. Japanese maples traditionally suggest an Asian garden style, and have a distinctive structure that doesn't blend easily with perennial borders, let alone with a billowing, colorful cottage garden.

Our solution was to build on the foliage of the maples by adding shrubs and herbaceous plants with burgundy leaves. *Cotinus coggygria* 'Royal Purple', *Berberis thunbergii* 'Atropurpurea Nana', purple elderberry (*Sambucus nigra* 'Guincho Purple'), and 'Albury Purple' St. Johnswort (*Hypericum androsaemum*) were chosen to echo the purple of the maples and also serve as a velvety dark foil for orange and red flowers--wands of *Crocosmia* 'Lucifer', *Phygelius Xrectus* 'African Queen', and *Agastache* 'Apricot Sunrise'. As a result, the maples, instead of standing out as solitary specimens, become part of a bigger ribbon of purple foliage that runs through the borders, and the rich backdrop of burgundy foliage makes these fiery flower spikes glow more intensely.

Perennials, vines, and even tropicals with purple and bittersweet chocolate leaves were added to continue weaving this theme throughout the borders. Bronze fennel, *Cimicifuga simplex* var. *simplex* 'Brunette', purple-leaved spurge (*Euphorbia amygdaloides* 'Rubra', *E. dulcis* 'Chameleon'), and purple-leaved loosestrife (*Lysimachia ciliata* 'Purpurea') were planted toward these ends. Cannas such as 'Bengal Tiger', with gargantuan spears of purplish red leaves and orange flowers, rub shoulders

with dahlias in saturated shades of yellow, orange, and burgundy, brightening the picture. Groups of purple sage frame the edges of sunny beds, and drifts of purple-leaved *Heuchera 'Ruby Veil'* line the walkway in shade.

To counterbalance the sultry, wine-colored foliage and echo the yellow-flowering perennials, we sprinkled gold and gold-variegated shrubs into the mix. A few were chosen for the permanence of their evergreen leaves--a golden silverberry (*Elaeagnus pungens 'Maculata'*) together with a red 'Eyepaint' rose screen a hot tub. The fine-textured, buttery yellow shrub honeysuckle *Lonicera nitida 'Baggesen's Gold'* billows at the base of the red climbing rose 'Don Juan' to hide its knobby knees, and remains a golden accent even in winter. Several evergreen 'Emerald 'n' Gold' euonymus make a showy groundcover along the shady border edging the terrace, accompanied by blue-green 'Cadet' **hostas** for contrast of form and color. *Spiraea japonica 'Goldflame'*, gold-leaved *Caryopteris Xclandonensis* 'Worcester Gold', *Hypericum inodorum 'Summergold'*, *Weigela 'Olympiade'* (widely listed as 'Rubidor'), and occasional splashes of golden feverfew and golden sage add cheerful highlights throughout the borders.

Plenty of yellow flowers echo the golden leaves--plates of 'Coronation Gold' yarrow, spikes of 'Moonraker' cape fuchsia (*Phygelius Xrectus 'Moonraker'*), the lacy foam of lady's-mantle, and numerous spurge spikes (*Euphorbia robbiae*, *E. wallichii*, *E. wulfenii*). Red and orange flowers bring the heat to a boil: spires of *Lobelia cardinalis* and *Crocosmia 'Lucifer'*; accents of Maltese cross (*Lychnis chalcedonica*); billowing mounds of *Potentilla 'Rot'* (meaning "red" in German); orange sun rose (*Helianthemum 'Henfield Brilliant'*); and California fuchsia (*Zauschneria californica*). A flowering pomegranate (*Punica granatum*) flaunts its carnationlike orange flowers against a gray wall, and roses in peach and apricot tones--'Westerland' and 'Sweet Juliet'--bloom against the wrought-iron fence that frames the east end of the garden. Even in shade, orange 'Gartenmeister Bonstedt' fuchsias and impatiens burn bright.

In the midst of red, yellow, and orange flowers supported by purple and golden leaves, occasional touches of blue-green foliage complement the heat like a taste of cool raita between bites of fiery curry. Towering plume poppy (*Macleaya microcarpa*), invaluable for its refreshing leaf color enhanced by pink midribs and frosted stems, rises along the back of a border crowded with tangerine Peruvian lilies (*Alstroemeria ligtu*), 'Paprika' Asiatic lilies, and peach daylilies. Blue oat grass (*Helictotrichon sempervirens*) gleams serenely, defining the corner of a bed. Its narrow, upright blades and slender summer inflorescences dance in the air like blue-green **fireworks** in front of a haze of 'Apricot Sunrise' hyssop with myriad peach tubular flowers. Donkeytail spurge (*Euphorbia myrsinifolia*) forms part of a blue-green carpet beside a well-traveled path near a purple laceleaf maple. The spurge's bright yellow flowers explode unexpectedly in February, lifting your heart in the dead of winter. A drift of ground-hugging woolly thyme (*Thymus lanuginosus*) laps over the edge of the path like a soft blanket. Its soothing, small, textured leaves make a fine foil for the bolder, succulent spurge.

Blue and blue-violet flowers also add cooling accents. Spires of gray Russian sage (*Perovskia atriplicifolia*) lean against orange 'Tropicanna' cannas and *Crocosmia Xcrocosmiiflora 'Solfatare'*, filling in the gaps between these crisp vertical plants with misty lavender flowers. Steel-blue sea holly (*Eryngium spp.*) and metallic globe thistle (*Echinops ritro*) complement the heat of brilliant red dahlias and daylilies. Blue-violet *Aster Xfrikartii* makes a soothing skirt at the base of warm-toned roses.

On the terrace, generous containers are filled with flowers and foliage that flow together with the overall scheme. Blue Swan River daisies (*Brachyscome iberidifolia*) echo the color and shape of the Frikart asters that bloom in nearby borders, while creamy yellow and orange nasturtiums, red *Salvia gregii*, orange flowering maple (*Abutilon spp.*), and colorful coleus pick up the heat. Dark-leaved 'Gartenmeister Bonstedt' fuchsias relate to the purple foliage within the beds, their tubular, orange flowers echoing the nearby cape fuchsias and California fuchsias. In the shadiest portions of the terrace, dwarf sweet box (*Sarcococca hookeriana* var. *humilis*) softens the walls and *Akebia quinata* embellishes the eaves, perhaps the only quiet touches in this flamboyant scene.

In the Pacific Northwest, where August's heat and drought are the test

of a garden, Roberts's borders pass with flying colors. Tall canna spears bloom like torches lit with flames of orange flowers. Their jumbo leaves alone (mahogany etched with red and green veined with yellow) are hot enough, and the ultimate garnish of brightly colored blooms adds extra sizzle. Hummingbirds dart between persimmon cape fuchsia and California fuchsia, between Buddleia davidii and Agastache "Apricot Sunrise" in frenzied delight, perfect expressions of the spirit of this garden.

Added material

Barbara Blossom Ashmun, author of Garden Retreats (Chronicle, forthcoming) and The Garden Design Primer (Burford, 1999), designs gardens, writes, and teaches in Portland, Oregon.

Photographs by ALLAN MANDELL

On the Roberts/Clark terrace, the yellow flowers of Bidens ferulifolia, Heliopsis 'Lorraine Sunshine', and Phygellus 'Moonraker' contrast with Aster Xfrikartii and Fuchsia 'Gartenmeister Bonstedt'.

Left: Pots of Fuchsia 'Gartenmeister Bonstedt', yellow Bidens ferulifolia, Verbena 'Temari Scarlet', and Nemesia 'Blue Bird' brighten a corner of the terrace, while Canna 'Tropicanna' and Rosa 'Eyepaint' glow in the nearby border. Right: Along a path, the jagged, glaucous leaves of Helleborus argutifolius make a handsome contrast to the flowers of Alstroemeria ligatu hybrids.

In a border anchored by one of the original Japanese maples, drumsticks of Allium sphaerocephalon punctuate a front-of-the-border planting of heliotrope and Scabiosa 'Butterfly Blue'. Coreopsis verticillata 'Moonbeam' and Achillea 'Coronation Gold' provide contrast. The low scale of the planting allows views of the city of Portland in the distance.

The flaming orange flowers of Canna 'Tropicanna' are echoed by the red and green tints of Alstroemeria psittacina. Butterfly-attracting Buddleia 'Nanho Purple' and Lavandula angustifolia 'Munstead' complement the yellow tones of Alchemilla mollis and Spiraea japonica 'Goldflame'.

DESCRIPTORS:

Landscape gardening; Color of plants; Color of flowers

(USE FORMAT 7 FOR FULLTEXT)

TEXT:

... a showy groundcover along the shady border edging the terrace, accompanied by blue-green 'Cadet' hostas for contrast of form and color. Spiraea japonica 'Goldflame', gold-leaved Caryopteris Xclandonensis 'Worcester Gold...'.

... Its narrow, upright blades and slender summer inflorescences dance in the air like blue-green fireworks in front of a haze of 'Apricot Sunrise' hyssop with myriad peach tubular flowers. Donkeytail...

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DIALOG(R) File 98:General Sci Abs/Full-Text  
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04039136 H.W. WILSON RECORD NUMBER: BGSA99039136 (THIS IS THE FULLTEXT)

Late notes.

Lovejoy, Ann

Horticulture v. 96 no7 (Sept./Oct. 1999) p. 44-7

SPECIAL FEATURES: 11 ISSN: 0018-5329

LANGUAGE: English

COUNTRY OF PUBLICATION: United States

RECORD TYPE: Abstract; Fulltext RECORD STATUS: Corrected or revised record

WORD COUNT: 2584

ABSTRACT: The use of long- and late-blooming plants to give life to the fall garden is discussed. The illusion that a great deal is still happening in the garden can be created by clustering the plants together in substantial numbers. The flowers can be given a supportive background by

choosing back-of-the-border shrubs that have flaming fall foliage. Advice on plants that are appropriate for the various U.S. zones is provided.

TEXT:

CREATING AN ABUNDANT and well-furnished garden is almost effortless in spring and summer, when nature and nurseries unite in pouring out their riches. By fall, however, heat and drought leave most borders looking decidedly past their prime. Gardeners who are not ready to toss in the trowel on Labor Day can earn weeks, even months, of enjoyment by incorporating various long- and late-blooming plants.

No matter which plants you select, it will prove most effective visually to cluster them in substantial numbers. Spotted about in ones and twos, even the showiest late flowers can't overcome the ennui of autumn. When banded together in concerted vignettes, their beauty echoes through the garden, creating the happy illusion that a great deal is still going on. To give these last flowers a supportive backdrop, you can also choose back-of-the-border shrubs with flaming fall foliage to provide an extra infusion of warmth.

It's never wise to overlook the obvious, so let's begin the search with the great aster clan. The selections in this hardworking genus get more impressive each year; there's no need to put up with ratty, fast-spreading thugs that don't earn their keep. The long-standing popularity of the Frikart hybrids (*A. Xfrikartii*; USDA Zone 6; 2-5 ft.) such as 'Monch' and 'Jungfrau' is well justified, and indeed, it's difficult to argue against the inclusion of an easygoing plant that blooms twice as long as most of its competitors. This is particularly true when the flowers are the soft periwinkle blues of the Frikarts, shades that flatter virtually any companion. True, Frikarts must be pinched or staked to avoid flopping and smothering nearby companions, but that is a small price to pay for such luxuriant beauty.

If you don't want to pinch your asters, try one of the newer New England hybrids such as *Aster novae-angliae* 'Purple Dome' (Zone 5; to 2 ft.), a generous bloomer that forms full, rounded heads with multiple side branches. *Aster lateriflorus* 'Prince' (Zone 3; 2-3 ft.) is a sturdy plant with dusky stems, near black foliage, and delicate pink flowers. An equally distinctive form, *A. l. 'Horizontalis'* (Zone 3; to 2 ft.), has a striking tiered habit and is shapely enough to use as a low hedge. Its architecture offers a charming foil to formal shapes, and a long ruffle of this side-branched aster will greatly enliven the base of a taller clipped hedge. Its creamy flowers have melting brown eyes that pleasingly echo the rich browns and coppers of autumn leaves and grasses.

There are even asters for shady, dry places. The black-stemmed, white-flowered wood aster, *A. divaricatus* (Zone 4; to 2 ft.), for example, flowers ebulliently in high shade and carries on surprisingly well even in dim, dry corners. The fine-textured *Aster ericooides* (Zone 3; 2-4 ft.) won't thrive under such poor conditions, but it will bloom happily in partial or filtered shade. This easily pleased species has many forms in many sizes and colors, the best of which are 'Ringdove' (2 ft.), with opalescent pinky gray flowers and an upright form, and 'Pink Cloud' (3-4 ft.), which makes airy, bushy mounds of feathery foliage and morning-sky-pink flowers.

It is not enough to sandwich a few asters into an established garden and hope for the best. Our autumn delights need attractive companions if they are to enchant our eyes during the off season. The wood asters keep good company with a trio of fetching Asian woodlanders. *Kirengeshoma palmata* (Zone 5; to 4 ft.) has large, light green palmate leaves on dark stems from which dangle shuttlecock flowers in pale yellow. This plant needs deep, rich soil to succeed, but Japanese anemone, *Anemone Xhybrida* (Zone 5; 3-6 ft.), will grow almost anywhere. It takes full sun or dry shade in stride, and offers many forms for exploration. The Victorian semidouble 'Whirlwind' (3 ft.) has white, ruffled petals that gleam beside sheaves of toad lily, *Tricyrtis 'White Towers'* (Zone 4; to 2 1/2 ft.). This is a delightful genus that combines late-blooming, orchidlike flowers in many colors with sculptural plant forms.

Asterlike boltonias are splendidly self-sufficient plants that stand tall and bloom well (from late August through September) in a variety of situations. *Boltonia asteroides* 'Snowbank' and 'Pink Beauty' (Zone 4; 4-6 ft.) are widely available, though not commonly grown. Perhaps this is

because they require a fair amount of room; when well suited both can achieve over six feet in height, with a girth of four feet. What this means, however, is that in a small garden just one plant can be the focal point of an impressive autumnal display. The softly colored 'Pink Beauty' was discovered some years ago by noted plantswoman Edith Eddleman, who selected it from a tray of seed-grown stock in a North Carolina nursery. Combine it with a silvery blue grass such as *Koeleria glauca* (Zone 6; to 2 ft.), which has biscuit-colored blooms, and rosy *Penstemon 'Hidcote Pink'* (Zone 6; to 4 ft.), which in autumn takes on lovely golden leaf tints and produces inflated seed heads like little rosy bladders. For added structural support, back up the group with red Culver's root, *Veronicastrum virginicum 'Fascination'* (Zone 4; 4-5 ft.), a native whose stiff pink spires rise above murky red leaves.

Mild falls encourage quite a few summer-flowering plants to bloom indefinitely, including peachy pink *Stachys albotomentosa* (Zone 8; to 3 ft.), a Mexican hummingbird plant par excellence. The flowers of both this and salmon-pink *S. a. 'Hidalgo'* just keep on coming; the bloom stalks elongate continually until frost cuts them down. The tubular flowers are set off beautifully by their own embossed foliage, cool sage green above and woolly gray below. Both plants combine nicely with silk grass, *Stipa tenuissima* (Zone 6; to 2 ft.), whose palomino-pale trusses are beautifully wind ruffled in autumn. Either of the stachyses also looks splendid with the hot coral trumpets of a low-growing sprawler, *Zauschneria arizonica* (Zone 5; to 3 ft.). These hot-flash flowers sound their clarion call well into fall, when they are much appreciated by lingering hummingbirds and solitary bees.

So is the fall-blooming South African lily relative *Schizostylis coccinea* (Zone 6; to 2 ft.), whose untidy, strappy foliage is tolerated for the sake of its sinuous pink, coral, or red flower stalks that bloom like an elongated gladiolus from late summer until March where winters are mild. The salmon-red florets of *S. c. 'November Cheer'* are particularly busy with bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds in fall. To mask its floppy foliage, tuck it into a carpet of leadwort (*Ceratostigma plumbaginoides*; Zone 5; to 18 in.), whose summery masses of spiky red buds and electric blue flowers look especially lovely amid its screaming red fall foliage. English plantsman Roy Lancaster's recent discovery, the fine-textured, trailing *Veronica peduncularis 'Georgia Blue'* (Zone 5; to 1 foot by 5 ft.), puts on a similar autumn show and tumbles with great cheer over walls and boulders.

Sumacs have a bad name for their running ways, but the sweet sumac selection, *Rhus aromatica 'Gro-Low'* (Zone 4; 3 ft. by 8 ft. wide) is a slow creeper with winning habits. Should you have a sunny slope, perhaps along the driveway, where reflected light and dry soil create problems, this handsome plant will solve them. Attractive in any season, it is splendid in fall, when its trifoliate leaves leap into flame. Pair it with prairie grasses such as Indian grass (*Sorghastrum nutans*; Zone 4; to 4-7 ft.), with fire-colored fall plumes, or little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*; Zone 3; 2-3 ft.), shimmering steel blue in summer and blazing bronze in autumn.

In smaller gardens, tall, willowy-leaved *Bidens heterophylla* (Zone 4; to 6 ft.) can provide a similar effect with less lateral spread. Its fine-textured columns are covered with little golden sunflowers from midsummer into November. This leggy bidens partners dramatically with white Culver's root (*Veronicastrum virginicum 'Album'*; Zone 5; to 5 ft.), with its strongly upright, candelabra form, each arching sideshoot tipped with glowing white tapers that light up the autumn garden. For a hotter combination, toss in some *Verbena bonariensis* (Zone 7; to 6 ft.), whose slim stems are tipped with frizzy flowers of electric purple. This short-lived perennial acts as an ardently self-sowing annual in colder climates, and is well worth trying far from its natural range. Few plants provide such an airy scrim, cleverly inserting themselves between neighbors with delicate skill and requiring very little ground space for their aerial explosions. *Verbena bonariensis* makes a striking contrast to the old-gold lacework of frilly *Patrinia scabiosifolia 'Nagoya'* (Zone 5; to 3 ft.), a Japanese cut flower that earned garden status with long and vivid bloom. The verbena also makes a potent backdrop for the effervescent billows of *Solidago rugosa 'Fireworks'* (Zone 4; to 4 ft.), whose spangled stems need no staking.

Recent German introductions of Helen's flowers have bolstered the old favorites. *Helenium 'Riverton Beauty'* (Zone 5; to 5 ft.) offers hot yellow flowers with chestnut-brown eyes and marries as readily with coppery carexes as with fading beech leaves. Newer cousins include *H. 'Coppelia'* (4 ft.), a robust plant that bears heavy crops of bronzed orange daisy flowers well into autumn. Underplant this dancing flower with *Spiraea japonica 'Magic Carpet'* (Zone 5; to 18 in.), a miniature sport of 'Goldflame' that shares the parental propensity for shocking fall show. *Helenium 'Feuersiegel'* (to 4 ft.) blends warm gold with flaming red, wonderful with the second flush of hot red flowers from *Penstemon 'Firebird'*. If you prefer cooler combinations, consider sandwiching *H. 'Zimbelstern'* (Zone 5; to 4 ft.), which bears masses of soft, greenish gold flowers, between pale, canary-yellow plumes of *Solidaster luteus 'Lemore'* (Zone 6; to 2 1/2 ft.) and the strapping prairie sunflower *Helianthus maximilianii* (Zone 4; to 8 ft.), whose fringed lemon daisies appear in profusion from late summer into fall. For all their bright beauty, however, no newcomer can replace *Helenium 'Moerheim Beauty'* (Zone 5; to 4 ft.). The flowers open smoldering copper red and mature to rich, tawny pumpkin, colors that complement everything from hot red maple leaves to burnished chrysanthemums and smoky asters.

Generally grown as an annual, a native marigold, *Tagetes lemonii* (Zone 8/9; to 4 ft.), offers dense, fine-textured foliage whose musky, pungent marigold scent holds hints of mint and lemon. In late summer and fall, each shoot is studded with button-size, tangerine-colored flowers that sparkle in combination with dusky purple *Penstemon 'Blackbird'*. It also accords well with *Aster lateriflorus 'Lovely'* (Zone 4; 2 ft.), with inky purple foliage and calico-pink flowers, and the magnificent hybrid *Aruncus 'Zweiweltenkind'* (Zone 5; 2-4 ft.), whose towering seed heads create a bronzed veil to mask fading summer flowers.

Where ornamental grasses are mixed into borders, fall color will never be in short supply, yet grasses alone don't make a whole picture. Foliage plants such as **hostas**, platycodons, and Siberian irises that turn shades of gold in autumn will help, as will our native chevron plant (*Persicaria virginiana*; Zone 5; to 2 1/2 ft.), whose striking leaves, wide and tapering, are banded with a broad burgundy check mark. Pair them with the dark foliage and fragrant white bottlebrushes of *Cimicifuga simplex* var. *simplex 'Brunette'* (Zone 4; to 7 ft.) or the shocking pink and purple flowers of *Fuchsia magellanica* (Zone 6; to 7 ft.), whose small flowers resemble dainty Victorian eardrops.

Clearly, there is no shortage of plants with late-season interest. That being so, we can afford to be picky, choosing only those that offer several seasons of attraction, remain shapely in and out of flower, and die with dignity. With these on our side, we can boldly stretch the garden year well beyond its former limits.

#### Added material

Ann Lovejoy lives on Bainbridge Island, Washington, and is the author of numerous books about gardening, including *The Garden in Bloom* (Sasquatch Books, 1998).

*Patrinia scabiosifolia* OPPOSITE: DAVID CAVAGNARO  
*Kirengeshoma palmata* ANDREW LAWSON  
*Boltonia 'Pink Beauty'* RICH POMERANTZ  
*Schizostylis coccinea* ANDREW LAWSON  
*Aster novae-angliae 'Purple Dome'* JERRY PAVIA

#### BLUE MEADOW FARM

184 Meadow Road, Montague Center, MA 01351 catalog \$3 *Aster lateriflorus 'Horizontalis'*, *A. novae-angliae 'Purple Dome'*, *Boltonia asteroides 'Pink Beauty'*, *B. a. 'Snowbank'*, *Kirengeshoma palmata*, *Patrinia scabiosifolia*, *Stachys albotomentosa*, *Veronica peduncularis 'Georgia Blue'*

#### KURT BLUEMEL

2740 Greene Lane, Baldwin, MD 21013, [www.bluemel.com](http://www.bluemel.com) catalog \$3 *Koeleria glauca*

444 East Main Street, Westminster, MD 21157 catalog \$3 *Aruncus sinensis* 'Child of Two Worlds' (= *A. 'Zweiweltenkind'*), *Aster ericoides*, *A. frikartii* 'Monch', *A. lateriflorus* 'Prince', *Boltonia asteroides* 'Pink Beauty', *B. a.* 'Snowbank', *Helenium autumnale* 'Cymbel Star' (= *H. 'Zimbelstern'*), *H. a.* 'Feuersiegel', *H. a.* 'Moerheim Beauty', *Kirengeshoma palmata*, *Tricyrtis hirta* 'White Towers'

#### DIGGING DOG NURSERY

P.O. Box 471, Albion, CA 95410 catalog \$3 *Aruncus 'Zweiweltenkind'*, *Aster divaricatus*, *A. Xdumosus* 'Purple Dome' (= *A. novae-angliae* 'Purple Dome'), *Aster Xfrikartii* 'Monch', *A. lateriflorus* 'Prince', *Bidens heterophylla*, *Boltonia asteroides* 'Pink Beauty', *B. a.* 'Snowbank', *Helenium autumnale* 'Moerheim Beauty', *H. a.* 'Riverton Beauty', *Kirengeshoma palmata*, *Patrinia scabiosifolia*, *Penstemon* 'Blackbird', *P. 'Hidcote Pink'*, *Stachys albotomentosa* 'Hidalgo'

#### FORESTFARM

990 Tetherow Road, Williams, OR 97544, [www.forestfarm.com](http://www.forestfarm.com) catalog \$4 *Aster divericatus*, *A. ericoides* 'Ringdove', *A. novae-angliae* 'Purple Dome', *A. vimineus* 'Lovely' (= *A. lateriflorus* 'Lovely'), *Ceratostigma plumbaginoides*, *Fuchsia magellanica*, *Solidaster luteus* 'Lemore', *Zauschneria arizonica*

#### GARDEN ESCAPE

[www.garden.com/plants](http://www.garden.com/plants) *Anemone Xhybrida*, *A. Xh.* 'Whirlwind', *Aster divericatus*, *A. Xfrikartii* 'Jungfrau', *A. Xf.* 'Monch', *A. lateriflorus* 'Horizontalis', *A. novae-angliae* 'Purple Dome', *Boltonia asteroides* 'Pink Beauty', *B. a.* 'Snowbank', *Ceratostigma plumbaginoides*, *Cimicifuga simplex* 'Brunette', *Helenium* 'Coppelia', *H. 'Moerheim Beauty'*, *Helianthus maximilianii*, *Kirengeshoma palmata*, *Patrinia scabiosifolia* 'Nagoya', *Rhus aromatica* 'Gro-Low', *Schizachyrium scoparium*, *Sorghastrum nutans*, *Verbena bonariensis*, *Veronicastrum virginicum* 'Album', *Zauschneria arizonica*

#### GOODWIN CREEK GARDENS

P.O. Box 83, Williams, OR 97544 catalog \$1 *Penstemon* 'Firebird', *P. 'Hidcote Pink'*, *Tagetes lemonii*, *Verbena bonariensis*, *Veronicastrum virginicum* 'Album'

#### HERONSWOOD NURSERY

7530 N.E. 288th Street, Kingston, WA 98346 [www.heronswood.com](http://www.heronswood.com) catalog \$5 *Aster ericoides* 'Pink Cloud', *A. Xfrikartii* 'Monch', *Fuchsia magellanica*, *Schizostylis coccinea*, *Veronica peduncularis* 'Georgia Blue'

#### PLANT'S DELIGHT NURSERY

9241 Sauls Road, Raleigh, NC 27603, [www.plantsdel.com](http://www.plantsdel.com) catalog \$2 *Patrinia scabiosifolia* 'Nagoya', *Solidago rugosa* 'Fireworks', *Stipa tenuissima*, *Tovara virginiana* (= *Persicaria virginiana*)

#### ROSLYN NURSERY

*Aruncus dioicus* 'Child of Two Worlds', *Aster Xfrikartii* 'Monch', *Aster novae-angliae* 'Purple Dome', *Ceratostigma plumbaginoides*, *Helenium 'Zimbelstern'*, *Kirengeshoma palmata*, *Spiraea japonica* 'Magic Carpet', *Veronica peduncularis* 'Georgia Blue'

#### WOODSIDE GARDENS

1191 Egg & I Road, Chimacum, WA 98325, [www.woodsidegarden.com](http://www.woodsidegarden.com) catalog \$2 *Aster lateriflorus* 'Prince', *Cimicifuga simplex* 'Brunette', *Fuchsia magellanica*, *Helenium* 'Feuersiegel', *H. 'Moerheim Beauty'*, *H. 'Riverton Beauty'*, *H. 'Zimbelstern'*, *Patrinia scabiosifolia*, *Penstemon* 'Blackbird', *P. 'Firebird'*, *P. 'Hidcote Pink'*, *Tricyrtis* 'White Towers'

We were unable to find sources for *Schizostylis coccinea* 'November Cheer' or *Veronicastrum virginicum* 'Fascination'.

DESCRIPTORS:

Landscape gardening; Ornamental plants; Plants--Flowering; Autumn

(USE FORMAT 7 FOR FULLTEXT)

TEXT:

... bloom. The verbena also makes a potent backdrop for the effervescent billows of *Solidago rugosa* 'Fireworks' (Zone 4; to 4 ft.), whose spangled stems need no staking.

Recent German introductions of...

...short supply, yet grasses alone don't make a whole picture. Foliage plants such as *hostas*, platycodons, and Siberian irises that turn shades of gold in autumn will help, as will...Sauls Road, Raleigh, NC 27603, [www.plantsdel.com](http://www.plantsdel.com) catalog \$2 *Patrinia scabiosifolia* 'Nagoya', *Solidago rugosa* 'Fireworks', *Stipa tenuissima*, *Tovara virginiana* (= *Persicaria virginiana*)

ROSLYN NURSERY

*Aruncus dioicus* 'Child of Two Worlds', Aster...

2/9,K/3 (Item 3 from file: 98)  
DIALOG(R)File 98:General Sci Abs/Full-Text  
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03292559 H.W. WILSON RECORD NUMBER: BGSI96042559 (THIS IS THE FULLTEXT)  
**Fall's grand finale.**

AUGMENTED TITLE: autumn perennials

Lovejoy, Ann

Horticulture (Horticulture) v. 74 (Nov. '96) p. 30-3

SPECIAL FEATURES: bibl il ISSN: 0018-5329

LANGUAGE: English

COUNTRY OF PUBLICATION: United States

RECORD TYPE: Abstract; Fulltext RECORD STATUS: Corrected or revised record

WORD COUNT: 1721

ABSTRACT: A well-planned garden border can remain attractive throughout the fall and well into winter. When the summer perennials have faded, a colorful display can be maintained with carefully planted late perennials supported by foliage plants that retain their beauty over multiple seasons. A number of suitable plants and combinations are described.

TEXT:

GARDENERS WHO TUCK their borders up for winter soon after Labor Day are missing out on what can be one of the garden's shining seasons. When carefully planted and mindfully groomed, well-planned borders in most parts of the country remain attractive well into winter. The bulk of summer perennials lose their luster, of course, but a stout-hearted handful carry on long after summer fades. Supported by shrubs whose foliage gains depth and brilliance as fall unfolds, these late bloomers add floral sparks to the flash and flare of autumn.

Such seasonal longevity is not a luxury available only to the well ached: the smallest garden, thoughtfully arranged, may yield a dazzling fall display. Backed by foliage plants with multiple seasons of beauty (staples in any good border), even modest quantities of late perennials have considerable impact. Compatible groups of two or three sorts can be sandwiched between spring and summer performers. As they rise, they mask any unsightly disintegration behind them. Given foreground companions that remain tidy after flowering (such as catmints, lavenders, and similar edging herbs, or numerous small grasses), late bloomers end the garden year with a grand finale untarnished by autumnal tattiness.

Indeed, a select few late perennials are multiseasonal stars, earning

front-row positions by looking terrific from emergence through slumping maturity. *Sedum 'Autumn Joy'* (USDA Zone 3; to 18 in.) is one, passing through each phase of life with aplomb. '*Autumn Joy*' combines memorably with silky hair grass (*Deschampsia caespitosa*; Zone 5; to 2 ft.) and a dozen spiky globes of *Allium christophii*, whose seed heads remain delightfully architectural long after their floral color drains away. The entire grouping looks good from spring into winter.

Another long-lasting partnership combines shimmering blue fescue, *Festuca glauca 'Blauglut'* (Zone 5; 8-12 in.), with dwarf leadwort, *Ceratostigma plumbaginoides* (Zone 5; to 12 in.). In spring, the leadwort's dark, lustrous green foliage makes splendid cover for tiny bulbs, which may ripen off unobtrusively beneath its loose cover. Come fall, those green leaves glow ember red and burgundy, liberally laced with sparkling, sapphire-blue flowers that echo the silvery blue, tufted grass.

There are plenty of candidates for mid- or back-of-the-border positions as well. A lusty floral sage, *Salvia involucrata 'Bethellii'* (Zone 6 with protection; to 4 ft.), makes an impressively shrubby mound, its enormous, fuzzy leaves deeply veined with fuchsia. This color is repeated in the flowers that stud sinuous panicles up to 18 inches long. '*Bethellii*' mingles happily with warm purples and blues as well as murky reds. It blooms long and late, a terrific companion for thundercloud-blue asters and chrysanthemums in ruddy coppers and bronzes at season's end.

Starry asters are classic fall flowers, coming in a smoky range of purples, blues, and lavenders as well as rose, pink, and white. Hard-working heath aster (*Aster ericoides*; Zone 4; 2-3 ft.) has several selected forms, among them the frilly '*White Heather*' (to 2 ft.) and the lustrous purple *eriooides* hybrid '*Ringdove*' (to 3 ft.). Both bloom in September and October, combining handsomely with the persistent silver buttons of pearly everlasting, *Anaphalis triplinervis* (Zone 3; to 2 ft.) and the gray lace of *Artemisia 'Huntington'* (Zone 3; 3-4 ft.). Indefatigable *Aster Xfrikartii* clones, notably the upright, periwinkle-blue '*Monch*' (Zone 5; to 2 1/2 ft.) and lavender-blue '*Wunder von Stafa*' (Zone 5; to 2 ft.), bloom straight through from June into October.

A few mystery hybrids such as warm lavender '*Fanny's Aster*' (Zone 4; to 4 ft.) and willowy, faded blue '*Our Latest One*' (Zone 4; to 6 ft.) don't even get going until Indian summer and are often still blooming a bit here at Christmas. So, too, is lanky *Aster tataricus* (Zone 3; to 7 ft.), with its long, floppy foliage and mid-lavender flowers.

Certain late asters are structural enough to use formally, frothing beneath a hedge or surrounding a stone fountain. Calico aster, *Aster lateriflorus 'Horizontalis'* (Zone 3; to 3 ft.), builds into an airy, multibranched plant with surprising strength of form. Calico aster produces quantities of tiny lavender flowers from late summer into autumn, when its foliage turns bronzy red and purple. Dusky A. l. '*Prince*' boasts striking purple foliage from spring on, and from August through October carries masses of whiskery white flowers with hot pink centers. To emphasize this detail, tuck in a few clumps of shocking pink *Nerine bowdenii* (Zone 8; to 18 in.), which blooms at the same time. In colder climates, spidery, rose-pink chrysanthemums make a lovely substitute, as does salmon-pink *Aster novae-angliae 'Andenken an Alma Potschke'* (Zone 4; to 3 ft.).

From September through October, southeastern native *Boltonia asteroides* (Zone 3; 3-6 ft.) looks like a cross between an aster and a pillow fight. Its fluffy white flowers and filigreed foliage contrast delightfully with billowing hydrangeas, spiky cardoons, or globe thistles, all of which age gracefully, given the chance. Both clean white '*Snowbank*' and chalky '*Pink Beauty*' complement satiny Japanese anemones, which overlap the bloom time of the boltonias. Gold-bossed and fringed, these poppy-shaped perennials have elegantly lobed and toothed foliage. *Anemone hupehensis 'September Charm'* (Zone 5; to 30 in.) opens big, single, mauve blossoms from September into November, as does crisp white *A. Xhybrida 'Honoree Jobert'* (Zone 6; to 3 ft.). Both are excellent border plants that also blend beautifully into formal schemes, tucked neatly between dwarf rhododendrons or box honeysuckle (*Lonicera pileata*).

For a livelier color scheme, combine skinny wands of *Verbena bonariensis* (Zone 6; 4-6 ft.), with seaside goldenrod (*Solidago sempervirens*; Zone 4; to 6 ft.). This spectacular native sends up sheaves of fluffy golden spears from September into October. For even more zip,

surround them with gaudy dahlias and flaming cardinal flowers, *Lobelia cardinalis* (Zone 2; to 3 ft.). Many of these bloom long and hard, notably 'Compliment Scarlet', a chunky German *cardinalis* hybrid with outsize scarlet flowers.

An eastern native, *Lobelia siphilitica* (Zone 5; to 3 ft.), sends up spires of summer-sky-blue flowers, lipped and fringed, with cloudy white throats. Pair this one with a dashing bluebeard, such as shrubby *Caryopteris Xclandonensis* (Zone 6; 3-4 ft.), with lake-blue flowers, or rich blue C. 'Arthur Simmonds', which I have seen in full bloom at the Chicago Botanic Garden in mid-October.

Also hailing from eastern meadows, obedient plant (*Physostegia virginiana*; Zone 3; 3-4 ft.) sends up sturdy spires that glow rosily in the slanting autumnal light. This slim southeastern native is easily overlooked until its pinky-purple flowers emerge at summer's end. The rose and purple forms look festive paired with bright zinnias or pink and purple cosmos. *Physostegia* 'Bouquet Rose' has dark pink blossoms that add depth and clarity to a hazy melange of lavenders and blues brightened with gray foliage. Those of *Physostegia* 'Vivid' produce sparkling light magenta flowers that look celebratory against dark red or purple leaves. Icy white 'Summer Snow' looks elegant flanking the leemony Austin rose 'Windrush' or banked against the dwarf shrub rose 'Seafroam', both of which rebloom reliably. Best of all is *Physostegia* 'Variegata', whose slim leaves are streaked white in spring and pink and ivory in summer. By autumn, raspberry-pink flowers bloom against foliage stained with rose and purple, a wonderful sight when paired with purple-leaved cooking sage (*Salvia officinalis* 'Purpurea') or the rusty red florets of *Sedum* 'Autumn Joy'. Push the neatly stacked florets of any *Physostegia* to any angle you like and they will obediently hold that position, a boon for flower arrangers.

A number of summer bloomers contribute late color with leaves rather than flowers. **Hostas** such as 'Blue Umbrellas' turn clear yellow as they fade, as does the upright Siberian iris 'Summer Skies'. That rascally herb Robert, *Geranium robertianum*, makes wheels of red lace, while godetia offers confetti-colored leaves of red and orange, yellow and purple. The trembling leaves of bowman's root, *Gillenia trifoliata* (Zone 4; 3-4 ft.), look made of beaten gold by late September. The last balloon flowers, *Platycodon grandiflorus* (Zone 4; to 18 in.), gleam startlingly blue against the citrus yellow of their leaves. Many ornamental grasses glow in autumn, notably shimmering switch grass, *Panicum virgatum* 'Heavy Metal' (Zone 5; 4-5 ft.), dwarf fountain grass, *Pennisetum alopecuroides* 'Hameln' (Zone 6; 1-2 ft.), and lava-red ribbons of blood grass, *Imperata cylindrica* 'Red Baron' (Zone 6; 1-2 ft.). A few summer strays add their might as well; even as winter draws near, my garden is always enriched by hardy fuchsias, ornamental oreganos, and the bright-eyed daisies of feverfew.

To learn which plants will linger longest in your garden, try regular, light grooming rather than a full-scale autumn cleanup. Visit other gardens as well, making notes about plants that hold their looks in fall. Reward any nursery bold enough to offer autumn perennials with your custom, buying anything (or everything) that catches your fancy. Back home, experiment with placement, moving potted plants about to find pleasing combinations and supportive companions. By adding just a few late bloomers each year, you will gradually transform your garden into one that combines the mellow beauties of Indian summer with the **fireworks** of fall.

#### Added material

Ann Lovejoy is a frequent contributor to this magazine. She gardens on Bainbridge Island, Washington.

A medley of autumn bloomers includes the white plumes of pampas grass, the shaggy manes of a miscanthus, orange and red kniphofias, and a hedge of *Aster lateriflorus* 'Horizontalis', which has bronzy foliage to accompany its lavender flowers.

Above, left to right: In autumn the foliage of *Platycodon grandiflorus* turns a rich buttery yellow; caryopteris produce flowers in a range of blues; boltonias bloom late and long and come in pink or white forms; anemones such as 'Honoree Jobert' have handsome foliage and thrive in light shade.

#### DESCRIPTORS:

Perennials (Plants); Garden borders; Autumn

(USE FORMAT 7 FOR FULLTEXT)

TEXT:

... flower arrangers.

A number of summer bloomers contribute late color with leaves rather than flowers. **Hostas** such as 'Blue Umbrellas' turn clear yellow as they fade, as does the upright Siberian...

...transform your garden into one that combines the mellow beauties of Indian summer with the **fireworks** of fall.

Added material

Ann Lovejoy is a frequent contributor to this magazine. She gardens...

2/9,K/4 (Item 4 from file: 98)

DIALOG(R)File 98:General Sci Abs/Full-Text

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03050738 H.W. WILSON RECORD NUMBER: BGSI95050738 (THIS IS THE FULLTEXT)

**The art of editing.**

AUGMENTED TITLE: thoughtful replanting rejuvenates a mature garden

Lovejoy, Ann

Horticulture (Horticulture) v. 73 (Dec. '95) p. 46-9

DOCUMENT TYPE: Feature Article

SPECIAL FEATURES: il ISSN: 0018-5329

LANGUAGE: English

COUNTRY OF PUBLICATION: United States

RECORD TYPE: Abstract; Fulltext RECORD STATUS: New record

WORD COUNT: 2567

ABSTRACT: Advice is given on the common composition problems that are encountered in gardens. Composition faults are usually due to either not enough happening or far too much going on. As a garden is never a finished product, editing out such problems is an integral and continual part of the gardening process.

TEXT:

IT IS OFTEN SAID that it is more fun to make a garden than to have one. We make our beds in joyful anticipation, then spend months, even years, waiting for fulfillment of the inner vision that created the garden. Very often, however, the maturing garden--or some major part of it--provides disappointments instead of thrills. All too soon, favorite vignettes have passed their prime. Once pleasing combinations look blurry and undistinguished. Perhaps our careful plans never materialized, and instead of offering floral **fireworks**, the garden has a drab uniformity, the beds display a boring sameness.

Such a conclusion does not mean it's time to toss in the trowel, only that some judicious editing is due. In the garden, as elsewhere in life, we need to cast a critical eye over our work, making careful observations and hard choices. That eye should be critical not in the harsh sense but in terms of seeking the roots of disharmony and imbalance. Quite often, the worst problems are fairly simple. There is too much of one thing and too little of something else. Abundance has become excess, balance has turned to stasis. One plant has triumphed over its neighbors, or a difficult site has taken its toll on the inhabitants.

Nearly always, the best solution is to look long and hard before doing anything about it. First observe and analyze, then act. Looking at the garden is easy enough, but unless we understand what we are seeing, we can't analyze it effectively. Until we can, our actions are apt to be misguided. English garden designer Penelope Hobhouse feels that training the eye is critically important. She suggests that would-be garden makers need to "get their eye in shape by looking first at landscape paintings and Impressionists." Classic landscapes such as those by John Constable and Nicolas Poussin demonstrate the importance of scale, proportion, and balance, and show how plants can be structural elements. Impressionist works are invaluable for teaching us how to play with light and shadow, form and mass, color and texture.

Naturally, those classic rules of composition that govern balance, harmony, and flow in visual art don't translate exactly into gardens. Painters have complete control over their viewers, who must stand within a given range to see their work. Not only will our gardens be seen from a multitude of positions, but we must establish lines of movement for feet as well as for the eye.

Learning to look at gardens in this manner helps us clarify the basis for our personal taste. It also explains why in many well-known gardens, certain beauty spots are photographed again and again, while equally attractive areas never appear in books or magazines. When we examine them closely, we usually discover that those photogenic plantings are highly structural. Either there is lovely hardscape involved (terraces, steps, pools, or arbors) or the plantings themselves are strong, with clear focal points. Studying both classic art and great gardens can help us appreciate the principles that inform good composition. In the garden, as anywhere, this means balancing relationships of shape and mass, mastering repetition of form and line, and using contrast of texture and color.

Most classic paintings are also based on a theme or central concept that affects every detail within them. These principles similarly inform sensitive garden editing. When we apply them at home, we start to see our own gardens in a whole new light. Suddenly we realize that the bed by the front door doesn't work because it's too narrow; the proportions are out of scale with the house. That stubbornly chaotic border won't come together because there is too much variety and not enough repetition. Another area is dull because most of its plants are too similar in size and shape. These Aha! experiences are genuinely enlightening because the recognition of the problem is the key to its resolution.

WHEN GARDEN COMPOSITIONS are unsatisfying, the fault can nearly always be found in one of two places. Either not enough is happening or far too much is going on. The former problem is more common and the more easily rectified. Gardens made by the book tend to be spaced with painful care, with too few plants, all arranged in earnest ribbons and rows. Given surplus elbow room from the start, plants may remain at arm's length for years, never melding into a cohesive community. At best, such gardens have a sort of spare, Zen elegance, but at worst (notably when perennials are involved), they prove the dictum that less is less. The solution is either to add more members to each clump of plants until they look comfortably lush, or to fill the gaps between groups with compatible companions, annual or perennial. Running groundcovers can also create flow and unity within a border as well as along its edges. In well-filled borders, no bare earth is visible after late May. Border plants should not be overcrowded, yet most are communal creatures, thriving in colonies rather than splendid isolation. In underfilled borders, a moderate dose of excess will prove the gardener's best friend.

A related difficulty arises when gardens contain great masses of too few kinds of plants. The beds are full enough, yet the effect is stultifying. The problem here is that more has become less. In this case, pull out a third to half of the repeated elements, creating empty pockets within the sea of sameness. Fill these with generous clusters of plants chosen to contrast with what's already in place. Pick plants that support your central theme, however, and don't go overboard by introducing too many unrelated new elements. Like spice, variety is most satisfying when judiciously applied.

THE OPPOSITE PROBLEM may arise in ardent collectors' gardens, where borders become jam-packed with fascinating plants. Unfortunately, no single plant ever captures our attention. The solution, once again, is to reduce overall quantities by a third to a half, removing any plants that are stunted or distorted by crowding, as well as those that are not displayed to advantage. Next, look carefully at the result. Often that step alone is sufficient action, allowing the remaining plants to ruffle out their foliage and assume their rightful amount of space. If space allows, you can add more plants to existing drifts to give them greater mass.

Overcrowding is also common in cottage gardens, where generosity and abundance can deteriorate quickly into chaos. Here, plants often colonize cheerfully, with self-sown seedlings spilling into the paths and tumbling out of tightly crammed beds. Begin the thinning process by removing

clutter; eliminate any plant whose role in the picture is not apparent. Part of the problem here is the bookish insistence on planting in sweeps--in very small gardens, a sweep of one might be perfectly sufficient, especially with a big sea kale (*Crambe cordifolia*) or a robust *Rodgersia podophylla*, or a massive *Hosta 'Krossa Regal'*. Less structural plants can be set in threes and fives for starters, altering quantities as your eye suggests.

Determining how much is enough is a matter of personal taste, but those who have a hard time weeding out perfectly good seedlings of lavatera--or hollyhocks, or lady's mantle, or copper fennel--soon learn that without control the garden becomes an undisciplined thicket.

In many gardens, the problems are less wholesale. The overall design may please us enormously, with most compositions coming on pretty much as planned. Perhaps just one or two refuse to come together. With young vignettes, especially those that involve mixtures of woody and herbaceous plants, time can set a good deal right. Since plants grow at different rates, it takes time for them all to assume their proper roles and fill their allotted spaces.

Where gaps are large, consider short-term annual fillers, which can be found in a great range of sizes, shapes, and colors. Castor beans, for instance, can be summery placeholders for shrubs and small trees, while red orach or amaranth can fill mid-border holes. The one caveat is that your long-term residents must not be overwhelmed by these transients. If lush foliage threatens to mar developing shrubs (woody plants are particularly prone to injury), prune away the overlying portions of those placeholders before any permanent harm results.

A common difficulty with mature vignettes is that of inner imbalance. Proportions that were once entirely pleasing shift subtly over the years until the original relationships are unrecognizably altered. Perhaps key players have become subsidiary to secondary plants that are not strong enough to hold the eye. When we have been living with a community of plants for a long time, it can be difficult to see the garden as it is. We remember so well the many ways it has been and imagine so clearly the ways it will be in future that the actual present can be clouded by these other visions. When a beloved plant has been the star of the border for decades, it's difficult to realize that its light may have become dimmed with age.

Even where every plant enjoys good health, long-established borders need a regular reappraisal. In some cases, adding more of a certain plant will renew the vitality of a composition more than removing its neighbors. In others, the mature grouping has simply grown too large for its setting. Rescaling the entire planting will bring it back into proportion with its surroundings.

A HOST OF MINOR PROBLEMS may require fine tuning rather than gross restructuring. Where everything is in tight harmony, each color and shape leading almost inevitably to the next, the result can be surprisingly bland. (Some of those color-matched borders remind me irresistibly of an obsessive friend's closets, where every stitch of clothing is color-coordinated.) Here, a little loosening of the stays can create excitement. Contrast does not have to be shockingly high to be effective, but overly subtle effects are ineffectual when viewed from more than a few feet away.

Introducing plants with bolder leaves and unusual textures can make a powerful difference to an overly controlled border. So will adding a few plants with looser habits--those of us with formal taste are often attracted to highly defined shapes. A few softer forms and textures will play off the strengths of firmer companions without diminishing their potency. Expanding the range of gentle pastel runs can help enormously as well. Deepen those timid palettes to ember and lighten them to ash, then watch those anemic borders come alive.

Naturally enough, most garden editing takes place in high summer, when the borders are full and in active growth. At that point, long-term solutions like replanting beds more structurally are both impractical and unappealing. Make detailed notes about the changes you decide upon, but don't do anything rash when the garden is at its peak of beauty. Save those ambitious renewal projects for fall, when cooler temperatures prevail.

Having critiqued them and found them wanting, you will of course be

totally discontent with the borders as they stand. Fortunately, there is at least one highly satisfactory way to make instant improvements without damaging the garden or yourself. My favorite editing technique involves accentuating the positive, drawing the eye toward something attractive while masking areas that fall short. To accomplish this, I fill large and handsome containers with large and handsome plants.

When artfully paired, plant and pot become a sculptural unit, as potently structural as any arbor or trellis. Because these potted plants can be moved indoors for the winter as well as about the garden, we can consider all sorts of exotic tender creatures that couldn't tolerate cold winters out of doors. Ornamental rhubarbs (*Rheum* spp.), spiky New Zealand flax (*Cordyline* spp.), and black rubber tree (*Ficus elastica* 'Black Form') are all splendidly effective for this purpose. Carefully placed, these living sculptures will screen those irksome lapses of taste or achievement until we have time to cope.

These dramatic container pieces are also excellent tools for testing the visual power of a given bed or border. For example, a lustrous *Fatsia japonica* in an outsize pot may bring a listless planting new life. This underscores the fact that the area in question lacks a focal point. While fatsia may be too tender to survive in your region, scores of tougher candidates could replace it. Bold-leaved bear's breeches (*Acanthus mollis*; USDA Zone 6/7), oakleaf hydrangea (*Hydrangea quercifolia*; Zone 4/5), or the lovely lacecaps (*H. macrophylla*; Zone 4/5) have enough character to dominate an overly quiet bed. Borders without focal points tend to look like those anonymous class pictures, full yet lacking a centerpiece. In borders and beds, focal points attract attention and make sense of their surroundings. Plants playing secondary and tertiary roles are made more valuable, for instead of being merely inadequate on their own, they are now supportively subsidiary.

Poring over delicious books can stir up the spring cleaning impulse, but the best way to improve our acuity is to visit other gardens. Make notes about what delights you, adding as many supportive details as possible. Over time, editing becomes as much a part of the gardening process as weeding and grooming. Because a garden is never a finished product, editing must be an ongoing activity. Not only do plants grow or dwindle, but our gardens change as we mature.

Our tastes, abilities, and needs all alter with time. Editing keeps us aware, so that our relationship with the garden remains genuine and immediate.

#### Added material

Ann Lovejoy wrote about eryngiums in the November issue of this magazine. Her new book, *Further Along the Garden Path*, was published this fall by Macmillan.

Left: A strong backbone of trees and shrubs and repetition of certain plants, such as berberis at this border's edge, provide a framework for a collector's border. Though this border is filled with many different plants, striking forms and foliage colors keep it from becoming a chaotic blur. An underlying theme of hot colors also lends coherence to this richly mixed planting.

Left, above: The bold shape and burgundy coloring of the ligularia foliage provide contrast and balance for the dramatic silvery spines of emerging cardoons.

Left, below: The clusters of narrow upright foliage from clumps of grass and iris offset the large horizontal leaves of the rodgersia. The smaller leaves of cannas and other rodgersias at lower right and left provide a sense of scale.

Right: A ground-cover of forget-me-nots (*Myosotis sylvatica*) ties together an early summer planting of tulips that might otherwise look sparse and somewhat disjointed.

#### DESCRIPTORS:

Garden design

(USE FORMAT 7 FOR FULLTEXT)

#### TEXT:

... look blurry and undistinguished. Perhaps our careful plans never

materialized, and instead of offering floral **fireworks**, the garden has a drab uniformity, the beds display a boring sameness.

Such a conclusion...with a big sea kale (*Crambe cordifolia*) or a robust *Rodgersia podophylla*, or a massive **Hosta** 'Krossa Regal'. Less structural plants can be set in threes and fives for starters, altering...?